

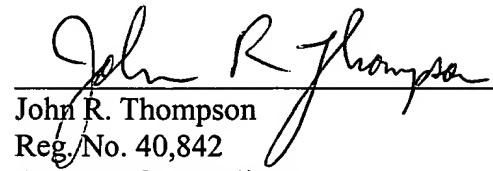
Remarks

Claims 1-33 are presently pending and stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 6,735,286 to Hansen et al (Hansen). Hansen claims priority to a PCT filing date of May 29, 1998. The pending application claims priority to United States Patent Application No. 09/040,916 (the “‘916 Application”) filed on March 18, 1998, and issuing as United States Patent No. 6,181,736 (the “‘736 Patent”). The ‘916 Application claims priority to United States Patent Application No. 60/041,458 (the “‘458 Application”) filed on March 25, 1997. Under 35 U.S.C. § 120, the pending application is entitled to the benefit of the earlier filing dates of the ‘916 Application and the ‘458 Application.

The claimed invention is disclosed throughout the ‘916 Application. More specifically, and in reference to the ‘736 Patent, aspects of the claimed invention are disclosed in column 14, line 20 to column 15, line 59 and column 24, line 1 to column 25, line 49. The claimed invention is further disclosed in the ‘458 Application. The prior disclosure satisfies the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112.

Hansen was not published or filed before the invention date of the pending application. The Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the anticipatory rejection. If there are any remaining issues preventing allowance of the pending claims that can be clarified by telephone, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,


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